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Copleston, Edward, Bp.

SEPARATION EITHER A DUTY OR A SIN.

A

SERMON,

PREACHED AT

THE CONSECRATION OF TRINITY CHURCH,
ABERGAVENNY,

Nov. 6, 1840,

BY

EDWARD, LORD BISHOP OF LLANDAFF.

THE PROFITS OF THIS PUBLICATION WILL BE APPLIED TO THE
ENLARGEMENT OF CHEPSTOW CHURCH.

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ADVERTISEMENT.

HAVING for many years endeavoured to impress upon the minds of those who not only employ the population in the mining district of this Diocese for their own profit, but who actually bring and settle them there, the serious obligation they lie under as Christians to provide the means of Christian instruction and pastoral care for their own people, and having been painfully frustrated in these endeavours either by the apathy of the rich, or by the perverse spirit of heresy and schism, I feel the less reserve in openly denouncing this neglect of a sacred duty, and in exhorting others to put their hand to a work so needful, and yet hitherto so imperfectly performed. The example of the Rhymney Iron Company, whose unanimous resolution was printed in the Appendix to

my Sermon preached at Usk in 1838, seems to have had little influence. I will, however, not cease to hold it up as a beacon to guide the feet of those who are traversing the same ground.

The Directors of that Company, at the Annual Meeting of Proprietors, in November, 1838, thus publicly declare their opinion :—

“ That the Company having caused to locate on what were before almost barren mountains a population of 8000 souls, and that number increasing daily, *the Company are upon every principle, moral and religious, bound to provide and endow a Church*, for the use of the tenants of the Company, and others,”—and they recommend the Proprietors to authorize the appropriation of land for a Church, a Church-yard, a Minister’s House and Garden, and Funds for the endowment of the same to the amount of £120 per annum, and to build Schools in connection with the Church, and to provide for their proper maintenance and management.

To their honour be it recorded, the whole body of Proprietors unanimously adopted these recommendations of the Directors.

Were this example followed by the other Proprietors of the Iron Works and Collieries in the Parishes of Merthyr Tidvil, Bedwelty, Mynydd-sloin, Aberustruth and Trevethin, what a change might be wrought in the moral and religious condition of sixty or seventy thousand people!—The melancholy fact is, that while one Church has been tardily provided, capable of holding about six or eight hundred persons, the surrounding population has been increased tenfold, assuming every form of sectarian dissent and schism, mixed with heathenism and avowed infidelity. The working classes are better paid, better fed and better lodged than the generality of their own order in any part of the kingdom. Neither are they destitute, as is sometimes imagined by those who declaim on the want of education in this country, of the ordinary attainments of reading and writing. On the contrary, they are plentifully supplied with materials from the Press for encouraging all their errors and all their evil passions.

Yet the only Churches provided by the em-

ployers of this immense population within the last twenty years, are, a small one at Doulais capable of holding 500 persons, consecrated in the year 1827, and another more capacious in the year 1828, at the Tredegar Iron Works, in the Parish of Bedwelty. A Church was also built in the Parish of Trevethin by a grant from the Society and by subscription, in the year 1832: and a Chapel has recently been opened by licence in the Parish of Trevethin, capable of holding six hundred persons, built by subscription, and unendowed. It is served by zealous and disinterested clergymen, almost without remuneration; and it is well attended.

One fact, well attested, ought to be generally known. It may be produced in answer to that pusillanimous apprehension often alleged as an excuse for doing nothing of the kind, namely, that the existing Churches are not overflowing.—The fact I allude to is, that the new Chapel is crowded, *without any diminution* of the numbers who attend the old places of worship. And such undoubtedly would be the case, if the Churches

were multiplied threefold. Nay, a very little reflection, and observation, and knowledge of human nature, is sufficient to teach us, that in a redundant population the paucity of Churches is a cause of dissent and irreligion. The influence of example, such is the social and imitative nature of man, is ever proportionate to the relative majority. Increase the number of Churches in such a case, and you always increase the congregations.

But even supposing the experiment to fail, and that the money expended upon it is unproductive, — a thing hardly possible to any great extent, — yet let me seriously ask the wealthy proprietors, whether they would regard the disappointment in the same light with that of an unprofitable speculation in trade. In trade, the sole object of expenditure is the return of pecuniary profit. In the case we are supposing, profit of this kind is not proposed. If they fail, they have the satisfaction of having done their best, — of having aimed at great good by liberal means. There is no fear of ridicule for injudicious scheming, or for excessive cupidity. “ Our desire, they may

say, “was not gain to ourselves, but benefit of the most important kind to our fellow-creatures,—to those especially who work for us, and in return for whose carnal things we would willingly make an offer of spiritual things. If they refuse the offer, our conscience at least is clear ; but we will not mar the gracefulness of a kind action, by anticipating an ungrateful reception.”

Hitherto I have thought it fairer to press this duty upon the attention of those to whom it chiefly, and almost exclusively, belongs, than to solicit the bounty of others, who are exhausted by claims of the same, or of a kindred nature, in their respective districts, to do the work for them. But if this appeal fails, I shall in the next year call upon the friends of the Church in the Diocese of Llandaff to form an Association, similar to those already existing in many Dioceses, for providing Churches in districts where that want is felt. In Wales, the want is scarcely felt at all, except in the parts where these lucrative works are carried on. The rest of the country has not experienced an increase of population at all cor-

responding with the general rate of increase in England. But even here the more liberal part of the community have in general sufficient scope for their bounty, in providing schools, and medical relief, and other charities, and improved accommodation in their Churches, and better support for their Ministers, without embracing also the care of districts, whose natural patrons are the proprietors and traders for whose benefit these recent colonies are planted. Would to God that this remonstrance may touch their hearts, and even at the expence of some displeasure against myself, excite a just sense of their deficiency, and a resolution to redeem the past by present and future exertions.

E. LLANDAFF.

TO

MISS RACHEL HERBERT,

FOUNDER OF TRINITY CHURCH, ABERGAVENNY.

MADAM,

THE following discourse, occasioned by your munificence, is dedicated to you, not so much in the expectation of gratifying your feelings, as for the sake of giving utterance to my own: for it is impossible to contemplate deeds of benevolence and piety so truly evangelical without strong emotions. By founding at the same time a CHURCH, a SCHOOL, and an ALMSHOUSE, and placing them in close connection with each other, you have embodied as it were in one act the three Christian Graces, FAITH, HOPE, and CHARITY.

That you may long enjoy the fruits of this labour

of love, in beholding the aged fed and comforted, the young well instructed, and the poor having the Gospel preached to them, through your means, is the sincere prayer of

Your Faithful Friend,

and Fellow-servant in Christ,

E. LLANDAFF.

*Deanery, St. Paul's,
Dec. 21, 1840.*

A

S E R M O N,

¶c.

LUKE, VIII. 18.

“Take heed how ye hear: for whosoever hath, to him shall be given; and whosoever hath not, from him shall be taken even that which he seemeth to have.”

In the full consideration of these words of our Saviour, much stress might be laid upon the necessity of a teachable and humble disposition in the hearers of the Gospel, in order that they may profit by what they hear, and procure that further assistance of God’s grace, without which no human instruction and no efforts of our own reason can save us. The subject, indeed, is one not only of prime importance, but of great extent and variety, according to the various descriptions of errors to which different minds are prone, and which prevail, in a

greater or less degree, among men, according to the change of circumstances, times, and manners.

In prosecuting the inquiry, however, this day, I shall not attempt to embrace them all. I shall confine myself almost entirely to one; which, though existing at all times, even in the first ages of the Church, yet appears to be especially prevalent at the present day; and the interesting occasion on which we are now met, seems to give a peculiar propriety and importance to the subject.

The solemn dedication of a building to the service of God, and to the furtherance of his blessed Gospel, ought to awaken in our minds a lively sense of all the duties which belong to us as disciples of Christ, as professors of the faith which we derive from him, as members of his body, and heirs of his kingdom,—as men who hope, by continuing in stedfast communion with him upon earth, to be received into those everlasting habitations which he is gone to prepare for us in his Father's house.

IT IS NOT WE WHO HAVE CHOSEN HIM, BUT HE HAS CHOSEN US. Let this truth be ever present to the mind of every disciple. The Church of God is no work of man's making,—no self-created body of re-

presentatives and their constituents,—no voluntary assemblage of men, associated by their own will and authority, and imparting, by their own act, authority to those set over them. It is a household not of man's but of God's forming. All power in it emanates from Christ who founded it; who, upon leaving the world, appointed governors and teachers, commissioned by himself, to extend and propagate it through the whole world, according to the model which he himself prescribed. By his first Apostles, and by those who in succeeding ages were from time to time called to the ministry, this visible body has been perpetuated down to our own times;— deriving not only its origin from him in the first instance, but being continually sustained, and quickened, and invigorated by him, as its invisible head, through the abiding influence of the Holy Spirit.

To that Church which he thus founded he gave authority to maintain order and discipline; to preserve soundness of doctrine and purity of manners; and to pour forth, as from a living fountain, the waters of life to all who would become his disciples, and submit to the rule of his Church.

These are simple truths, familiar to most of you my Christian brethren, and to many of you it may

seem almost superfluous to dwell upon them. Yet I believe that no error is more prevalent among Christians, than that which springs either from an utter ignorance of the true constitution of Christ's Church, or from a disregard of the fundamental principles on which it was first established.

It is the more important to point out the danger of this error, and to warn men loudly against it, because most of the persons who are influenced by it seem not to suspect that they *can* be acting wrong in what they are doing. The very gratification and delight they experience is apt to be considered by themselves as a proof that they are right,—as a sanction from heaven, which no human authority can supersede. And what error is so dangerous as that which carries with it the semblance of a *duty*?—which approves itself to the conscience of the party in proportion as it gratifies his desires.

It will readily be understood that I speak now of those hearers of the word who choose for themselves their own teachers; deserting the communion to which, according to the ordinance of the Church, they should adhere, and following any new guide who may present himself, provided his language and manner be fervent, and his doctrine such as excites

and interests their own minds. Such, I believe, is the ground of preference with many thousands of those who profess to be dissatisfied with the regular ministry, —and they seem to think it enough to say, that they are better *pleased* with another mode of preaching, whoever the person may be they choose to follow, however authorised, or by whomsoever appointed.

Undoubtedly there are many who, upon mature deliberation, are convinced that the doctrines they hear in this manner are more agreeable to the Gospel of Christ, and that the persons to whom they listen have equal authority with those who derive their Ordination in due succession from the Apostles. Against such I would be far from advancing any reproachful language, much less from wishing that their liberty of judging and acting should be restrained by any coercive measures. The conformity which is purchased by these means is a mere outward show, without any spiritual benefit or any real value. Unless it be the result either of judgment and conviction, or of a pious and humble mind impressed with a sense of duty, and relying upon the instruction of those who are sent to teach him, it is nothing worth.

In all cases then, where a man is thoroughly and soberly convinced that our Church is in error, and

that he hears the truth more soundly taught by other ministers, equally commissioned to perform that office, it is our duty, even if we fail of convincing, still to respect the motive, and not to call in question the sincerity of those who appeal to their own conscience, however sure we may be that they are greatly deceived.

But to *all* the followers of Christ we are bound to represent that the question, at least, is one of high importance—that it is not a matter of indifference, or one of slight moment—nor, again, a thing to be weighed in the scale of each man's own *inclinations* ;—that although no human power can deprive him of the right of judging for himself, yet that he himself, when he leaves his appointed guide, is deeply responsible to God for the judgment he forms ; and it is more especially the office of Christ's ministers to awaken men to a sense of the serious risk they run in exercising such a choice.

That there *is* such a sin as schism, hardly any reader of the New Testament will deny. If there be one duty which St. Paul inculcates more frequently than another, it is that of firm union and concord in the Church. “ I beseech you, brethren, by the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that ye all

speak the same thing, and that there be no divisions among you; but that ye be perfectly joined together in the same mind, and in the same judgment.”* He then condemns that party spirit which had crept in among the Corinthians, and led to their separation into different congregations, saying among themselves, “I am of Paul, I of Apollos, I of Cephas, I of Christ.” The last of these appellations teaches us that it was not so much false and heretical doctrine, as the spirit of party and disunion, which St. Paul had in view. The name even of Christ, assumed as an exclusive title by one congregation, and distinguishing themselves from other Christians, is declared equally blameable with the assumption of human names as badges of distinction.

Indeed, if there be no difference of doctrine,—nothing we can allege as a cause of separation, besides the love of something peculiar, or the preference men give to the manner or person of some individual, there is less to be said in defence of this step, than where they complain that the true doctrine is not taught by the established ministers. It becomes then the *mere* spirit of division—a spirit which infects, more or less, all human society—and which, though often

* 1 Cor. i. 10.

productive of good in worldly affairs, is most opposite to the character of genuine Christianity in the concerns of religion. It is against this spirit and this practice that the Apostle speaks so earnestly. It cannot be imagined that St. Paul himself preached any thing but the best and purest doctrine, and yet he forbids the use of his own name, lest it should lead to such an evil consequence.

In the same strain he addresses the Church at Miletus, forewarning them of these afflictions. “ Yea of your own selves shall men arise, speaking perverse things to draw away disciples after them;”* and to Timothy he observes that in future all these disorders shall even increase. “ For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine ; but after their own lusts shall they heap to themselves teachers, having itching ears, and they shall turn away their ears from the truth, and shall be turned unto fables.”†

Other authorities to the same effect might be adduced from the writings of St. Peter, St. John and St Jude ; but enough has been said for our present purpose, which is, not to direct these passages against any particular sect or denomination of

* Acts, xx. 30.

† 2 Tim. iv. 3.

Christians in the present day, as specially denoted by these censures, but to point out to your serious attention that there undoubtedly *is* such a sin as groundless division—for which sin those who are guilty will be called to a severe account—that the sin began early in the history of the Church—and that we have every reason to think it continues to exist, and *will* continue as one of the weapons of our spiritual adversary to the end of time. *✓*

Upon a calm and candid investigation of the motives which incline men to this conduct, it will perhaps be found that, in most instances, they have *not taken sufficient heed how they hear*—that *pleasure* has been the object, at least as much as *edification*. Sound doctrine is not enough of itself to engage such hearers, unless it be adorned, or animated, or recommended by a warm and energetic delivery. But admitting that these circumstances are not without their use, and may, according to the ability of the preacher or the habits of his hearers, be employed with good effect, and *ought* to be so employed, yet no one who is impressed with a sense of the duty of Church union will maintain the want of these qualities to be a justifiable cause of separation. He will rather sup-

press every rising sentiment of impatience, frequently reminding himself that in the Church all things are to be done unto edifying ; that a mind rightly disposed to hear will easily draw matter of improvement from a discourse which contains sound doctrine, however deficient it may be in the attractive qualities of eloquence or composition. Whenever these objects are wilfully neglected, blame may justly be cast upon the teacher ; but in all cases the hearer is also culpable, if he suffers the useful part to be lost because it is wanting in what is agreeable —because it fails in creating such lively and strong emotions as people are fond of deriving from a public discourse—because it leaves too much for their own attention to supply in order to make it really profitable.

It sometimes happens, indeed, that the hearer alone is to blame, when the discourse appears uninteresting and incapable of detaining his attention. The subject itself, perhaps, although one of the points which it is the duty of a Christian minister to bring, from time to time, before his hearers, may have no attractions for *him*, and he longs for those topics which admit of greater warmth of sentiment, and affect the heart and the imagination in a more

sensible degree. The great happiness of being at peace with God, and assured of his favour—the privileges of the elect—the comforting influence of the Holy Spirit—the contrast between a state of impenitence and a state of grace—these, undoubtedly, are all genuine Christian doctrines, fit and necessary to be inculcated often and often as means of edification ; but to suppose that the whole of Christianity is comprehended within these limits, to present these notions perpetually to the minds of hearers, to enlarge upon them in vehement and copious language, and to represent all other matters as comparatively unimportant, is to take a narrow and a very imperfect view of the Gospel dispensation, and of the duties enjoined upon its ministers.

How, indeed, can it be enough to dwell upon a few points, when it is the object of the Christian religion to exhibit a rule of life extending to all occasions, and to all descriptions of persons ; to correct *all* evil habits and inclinations which, under a variety of disguises, assail the heart of man, and make his passage through this life a scene of continual labour and danger ? Even with the best dispositions he is for ever liable to ignorance and mistake : false teachers and false brethren on the

one hand, and worldly-minded seducers on the other, require to be counteracted by frequently combating the erroneous opinions that are introduced, and by exposing the unsound reasonings and the artifices of those who lie in wait to deceive. And besides these, the heart itself is deceitful above all things, and stands in need of constant care and admonition, lest the lessons it once received should begin to wear away, and yield to the more powerful solicitations of carnal appetite and worldly interest.

Again, in an age like the present every thing is called in question and examined. People are flattered into a belief that they are competent judges of all their interests ; and every thing right and sound requires to be vindicated from a thousand cavils and objections. Even the foundations of our faith it is necessary, from time to time, to defend against the arts of sophistry and unbelief. In doing this we are bound to consult the interests of all our brethren. What appears obvious and indisputable to one, and has long been familiar to his mind, to another is new, strange, and of a doubtful character. Let not him who is above the need of assistance, in such cases, despise him who is not ; or grudge the time bestowed for *his* benefit. The

same treatment is not adapted to every mind, any more than it is to every constitution of body. And as the food which is found most nourishing to one is often insipid or disagreeable to another, so it may often happen with the preaching of the Gospel. What is *most* suitable to each cannot be addressed at the same moment to all ; and in order that each may in turn receive what is most for his advantage, it is necessary that a wide range should be taken, and a great variety both in the matter and in the mode of handling it be attempted. Our Saviour has himself described the duty of a pastor to his Church by a comparison admirably expressive of the view I have here taken of the subject. “ Therefore every scribe who is instructed unto the kingdom of heaven, is like unto a man that is an householder, who bringeth forth out of his treasure things new and old.” *

The view I have been endeavouring to give of the reciprocal duty of the hearer and of the preacher of the word of God, and of the necessity there is of a disposition in the one corresponding with the intentions and endeavours of the other, is strikingly

illustrated in our Lord's well-known parable of the sower. The seed, according to that beautiful and instructive lesson, was liberally sown in soil of every kind. In some it took no root at all: as soon as it was cast it was caught up and devoured: the mind could hardly be said to *receive* it; but suffered it to be carried away by the first temptation which the devil or the world might offer. In others, after it had sprung up, it withered away of its own accord, not receiving that daily care and nourishment which is necessary to its support. In others again, the riches and vain pursuits of this life wholly engrossing the mind left no room for the word of God to spread and flourish. And, lastly, where it not only took root, but brought forth fruit abundantly, it is still described as having *gradually* arrived at that perfection; and the honest and good heart, which is denoted by the good ground, is said to bring forth fruit *with patience*.

To him who hears with the disposition alluded to in the parable—to the really honest and good heart—the grace of God will not be wanting; but will enable him to extract profit from any discourse, however plain or even barren it may seem to others, provided it contain the words of sound doctrine;

and he will go back to his house better furnished in the way of salvation than those who have sought only, by attendance on the preacher, their own gratification. All preachers, we know, cannot be eloquent, all cannot possess the arts which attract and command attention; but all have it in their power to speak forth the saving words of truth and soberness; and when these words are spoken, it depends upon the hearer whether they shall pass away as empty sounds, or be a well of waters within him springing forth to life eternal.

If men would but severely examine themselves, and subdue their pride, and reflect on the blessing promised to those that are of a meek and humble spirit, when they repair to the house of God, we should hear much more of their own unworthiness, and much less of their teacher's incompetency to instruct them. Let them honestly ask their own hearts,

“Do I come here for my own profit, or for my own gratification? If for my profit, let me thankfully turn every thing I can to a profitable account; and let me pray for the increase of faith, and for a blessing upon the means now offered for

my spiritual improvement. I know that God exalteth the meek and giveth grace to the humble.

“ If, therefore, I seek for instruction and improvement only, I am sure he will not withhold it from me ; but if I come with ‘itching ears,’ to please myself, to have my feelings excited, or my fancy amused, or my curiosity gratified, I may indeed go away disappointed and dissatisfied ; but have I a right to blame any one besides myself ? ”

Let me put the case, by way of illustration, of people assembling to hear a lecture on any subject of human science or art. Do not the light and careless hearers (who compose perhaps the generality) hope to be amused, and interested, and entertained, while the true lover of science seeks only for instruction ? And is it not one of the commonest practices of those who teach in this way, to address themselves to the former class rather than to the latter, — to attract an audience by introducing what is new, or curious, or striking, rather than by inculcating the plain principles of knowledge, however dry, upon which the whole is built, — and which, although less attractive at the moment, are permanently more useful to mankind, and more valuable to the learner ?

Let this, then, suffice by way of admonition, as to the duty of *hearing the word of God.*

But remember, above all, I beseech you, that the house of God is emphatically called the house of *prayer* ;—that it is not only the place in which the word of God is to be taught and explained, but that it is here you will join in social prayer for every blessing, temporal as well as spiritual ; and here that you will commemorate, according to the dying injunction of your Redeemer, that Redeemer's death and sufferings ;—that here you will renew, from time to time, your covenant with him ;—that you will lay down the heavy load of your sins at his feet, and take upon you the lighter burden of his service ;—it is here that you will from your heart forgive the wrongs of others, as you hope to be forgiven yourselves the offences you have committed against God ;—it is here that you will seek to rekindle in your breast the feelings of charity towards your neighbour, which the accidents of life may have interrupted ;—and you will return from hence to your homes relieved, refreshed, and strengthened by the Holy Spirit, resolved to maintain your communion with

Christ, and to serve him afterwards more constantly in reverence and godly fear.

Do not then, I beseech you, slight the privilege, and turn a deaf ear to the gracious invitation, when by the voice of his minister you are bidden to his table. Do not hold out as an excuse that you are unworthy. No man is unworthy who is duly sensible of his sins, and desirous of being reconciled to God through Christ. Do not pretend that you are really and heartily Christ's disciples, and yet wilfully abstain from his communion. Do not pray with your lips that he will increase your faith, and help your unbelief, while you at the same time deliberately put away from you the very means he has provided for nourishing this faith in your hearts ; but gladly repair to his holy temple, whenever you are called to join in prayer with the congregation. And may this house thus become to you, not only a place of shelter, and refuge, and comfort amidst worldly sorrows, but the very portal and gate of heaven.

Surely, then, it is one of the most blessed and praiseworthy deeds to provide the means of this instruction, this spiritual comfort, and this social worship, according to the primitive pattern of the

true Church, to the still increasing myriads of this nation,—a nation blessed with freedom above most others, both political and religious,—but exposed at the same time, and perhaps on that very account the more exposed, to all the mischief which pride, and impatience of rule, and love of novelty engender. If, in the midst of such perils and distractions, the people of this land are to be kept harmless, and faithful to their social duties, it must be by teaching them the wholesome truths of Christ's Gospel, by leading them to think soberly, reverently, and awfully of his divine word, by exhorting them to set their affections upon him, and to love him, even as he loved us, and to count all things for nought in comparison of his favour and blessing, which is given to all those who truly turn to him.

But how can these principles and affections be implanted in the breasts of those who are out of hearing of the gracious message of divine love? How can they strike root and flourish there, unless the means be provided for extending the benefit of Christian instruction and of communion with the Church, to all who are willing to take refuge within her sanctuary?

Happy, then, are those disciples who not only enjoy this privilege in their own persons, but who labour to impart the blessing as widely as possible to their less fortunate brethren,—who spread the banquet, not for the rich, and great, and powerful, but for those who cannot recompense them,—for those who would otherwise hunger and thirst without being satisfied—or who, losing the taste for heavenly food, would abandon themselves to the indulgence of a vicious and depraved appetite, become the slaves of sin, and drink deep of its deadly poison.

In this neighbourhood, more especially, have we long had before our eyes the dismal and afflicting spectacle of multitudes invited to settle on a barren waste, to live there, to labour there, to bring up families there, without any Church, or any duly authorized minister provided for them, — left to their own natural darkness, rather, I may say, to their natural hatred of light, or at best, to the casual impulse of any form of religion which may be presented to their minds.

In vain, amidst the fabrics that in these districts are reared by the skill and power of man, supplying

fresh means of wealth in proportion to its continued growth and accumulation, in vain do we look for buildings destined to the production of true riches. Or, if an edifice of this kind be, after a long period of expectation, tardily provided, it bears no proportion to the vast tide of population which has in the meantime been swelling and spreading all around, and is hardly visible amidst their crowded dwellings.

Does not then the question naturally arise, on a view of this preposterous state of things,—why is this forgetfulness of God? — Whose are all those lines of houses, those arsenals of wealth, where every sound by which our approach to the abode of man is recognized assails the ear,—all save the Sabbath signal for prayer—all save the voice of one crying in the wilderness, “ Prepare ye the way of the Lord ? ” — For whose benefit are these myriads collected, to spend their lives on this heretofore solitary ground ? — Are they men who believe in his Gospel ? — Are they members of the household of faith ? — And can they, year after year, draw additional crowds to the spot, and yet make no provision for their spiritual instruction, for the due administration of the Sacraments, and for the preaching of God’s word ?

I trust, indeed, that the reign of this ungodly carelessness is passing away, that a better spirit is at length rising, that the consciences of men are awakened, and that we shall soon witness exertions corresponding with the magnitude of the want, with the means at their disposal, and with the commanding force of those claims which have hitherto been little regarded.

Meanwhile, let us rejoice and thank God for the bright example which this day's solemnity brings before our eyes. Let us rejoice in it, not only as affording evidence of firm faith and fervent charity in one upon whom no peculiar obligation rested to execute so good a work, and who seeks not the praise of man for its accomplishment, but let us cherish the hope that others will catch the holy flame thus kindled,—that they will acknowledge the justice of our call, — and, conscious of having been too long idle, and knowing that the night cometh when no man can work, will seek to make up by immediate diligence what was lost in the beginning of the day.

May God grant to all those who in any degree labour in his Son's name, and more especially to

the munificent giver of this sacred building, that they may see the people among whom they live, not only thankful for the benefit, but made happier, and better, and holier by it; and may we all join in praise and thanksgiving to the Author of all Good, for having put it into Her heart to labour thus zealously and effectually for the increase of His Son's kingdom.

To Him, &c.

